

# THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cowper*



PARTING IN ANGER.

1776.

A TALE OF THE AMERICAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE.

CHAPTER III.—THE OLD BOND BROKEN.

**Y**EARS had passed since the grievous event recorded in the last chapter. The two that were children then were now deep in the romance of youth. The friends who had mourned with almost equal sorrow were friends still, but the discord of the time put a heavy strain on the old hereditary bond.

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Calm and cool in his ways of thought and action, an advocate and example of moderation, Archdale was nevertheless known to be what his neighbours called "an out-and-out liberty man," a genuine democrat, who maintained the sovereign rights of the people on as broad a basis as ever did Greek or Roman when king and tyrant were synonymous titles with them. Sincerely attached to the land of his birth and parentage, with a boundless hope in its future and a firm faith in its resources, he took part with

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his American countrymen in their opposition to the royal prerogative, which in his opinion should never have existed, and to the parliament in whose election they had no voice.

Naturally inclined to trust in the long-established, and revere what elder generations had set up, Delamere was a Tory of the old nonjuring stamp, only his faith was pledged to a different dynasty. He believed in the divine right of George III to tax his American provinces, thought the acts of the British parliament perpetually binding on all the colonies, and loyalty to his king the first duty of a Christian gentleman.

Many a warm but friendly controversy the two squires had on their respective opinions, particularly as regarded the points in dispute between the old country and their own. But as the dispute grew hotter, and tempers more inflamed on both sides of the Atlantic, they avoided the subject by tacit agreement, which indeed kept peace, but also brought estrangement between the old familiar friends. Without free speech there is no real companionship, and it was neither natural nor possible to keep silence on questions with which the land rang from side to side.

They became less frequent visitors at each other's houses, less frequent surveyors of each other's fields; and when they did chance to meet, there was a degree of constraint in their intercourse unknown to former days. Such constraint was upon them now as they sat in that pleasant, homely room, with windows, full of flowering plants, looking out on the lawn, and commanding beyond it a glorious prospect of farm and woodland, hill and river, bathed in the soft haze and mellowed sunshine of the season.

There were grander apartments in the mansion kept for times of state and fine company, but that was the citadel of household comfort and convenience—half parlour, half library—where Delamere kept his treasury of books, old and new—for, like most American gentlemen, he had a cultivated taste and a genuine love of literature—where his father's escritoire, his mother's rocking-chair, and his daughter's work-table, stood side by side with other old-fashioned and memorial furnishings. Many a social hour had the two passed there at the open windows in summer evenings, or by the blazing hearth in winter nights, and the genius of the place might have brought back to them those better times, but unfortunately in his last importation of books from England there was a pamphlet after Delamere's own Tory heart, which he had read and rejoiced over all the morning.

"There!" he cried, with a look of boundless triumph, putting it into Archdale's hand the moment they had exchanged greetings, "'Taxation no Tyranny,' by Dr. Samuel Johnson. Read it; you are welcome to the loan; and if that does not bring you to a right way of thinking, nothing will."

"Thank you, my friend, but I have read it—Franklin sent it to me by the last packet," and Archdale laid down the pamphlet on the table and took a chair close by.

"Are you convinced, then?" inquired the master of the Elms.

"Yes, that the man has gone far out of his depth," said the other.

"What, Archdale! the author of the 'Rambler,' which you used to admire so much?"

"I do so still, my friend. In the 'Rambler' Johnson was at home with his subjects; he is a man

of wit, of learning, and of piety, after his own fashion; but he is neither a politician nor a philosopher, his mind is too backward for the one and too bounded for the other."

"Ah! you depreciate the great Samuel because he writes against your party. Upon my word, I thought you had more candour."

"Well, then, Delamere, I will do him justice now; the great Doctor is the man of the uppermost, he roars against us at the London dinner-tables because it suits George III and his ministers; he would have roared against Luther because it suited Kaiser Charles and the Pope, and against the early Christians because it suited Nero. Perhaps that is overstating the case," said Archdale, for he saw a dark flush rising to his friend's brow; "but surely, Delamere, you, as a New England man, cannot approve of the manner in which he chooses to speak of us, as if we were all the descendants of convicts, or men who had fled from their creditors, which must be intentional misrepresentation, for I cannot believe it is ignorance."

"I do not approve of it;" and the squire looked half ashamed of his faith's defender. "If I were as clever as you, Archdale, I would write Johnson a smart letter on the subject."

"You could do it better than I, my friend; but it is not worth while; nobody can set a man right who means to stay wrong; and there is some allowance to be made, for how could he and the dinner-loving, four-walled, wordy generation, amongst whom he lives, form a true estimate of a people born and brought up among these grand old woods and noble rivers, where liberty breathes in every breeze and speaks in every echo?"

"Ay, Archdale; but this talk about liberty will bring ruin on these provinces. I wish that you and other sensible men of your party would lay to heart Johnson's warning, for wherever the doctor is wrong be sure he is right there. If the hot heads among us drive this country into rebellion, they will bring upon us the vengeance of a powerful government, British fleets will destroy our ports, and British armies lay waste our lands."

"My friend, war always brings evil and destruction, and is therefore to be avoided as far as possible by every wise and good man. Yet if the questions between us and the old country went to the arbitration of the sword, we need not fear for the issue. There are yet living among us the men who fought at Fort Duquesne and Louisburg, at Niagara and Crown Point; in those fields, whether of victory or defeat, you know if it were the British regulars or our own men who did the most effectual service, for you and I were there, Delamere."

"I remember—I remember them well. It was our own men that did whatever was done; but that was for our king and his just rights," said the master of the Elms, with a sigh.

"No, Delamere, it was for our country—for our Protestant faith and for our English laws, to save them from the clutch of the Most Christian King and his advisers, temporal and spiritual. I recollect you and me discussing that subject by a watch-fire on the bank of the Monongahela, the night after poor Braddock's retreat."

"You saved my life that day," said Delamere.

"And you saved mine the day we met old Dieskau at Crown Point," said Archdale. "Ah! my friend, with such recollections, and years of kindly com-

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panionship at home and abroad to bind our hearts together, why should you and I dispute on matters of opinion, in which the best may differ? and no reasonable man can hold himself free from error. I came to speak with you this afternoon on a subject which more nearly concerns us and ours. Your daughter and my son have played and grown up together, and you probably know something of the affection that exists between them. I can vouch for its truth, on Sydney's part at least; but, like ourselves in the courting days long ago, my poor boy is troubled with jealous fears lest some of the numerous young men who gather around Miss Constance wherever she goes, may some day step before him and carry off the prize. But it is his belief—or rather hope—that with your sanction he could push on the siege more vigorously, and foil them all at last. You may be sure I should be well content to see the ancestral friendship of our families cemented by the young people's wedding. The Plantation will be Sydney's, of course, when I go hence; but, my friend, it is not the union of estates I am concerned about. If you would prefer that a Delamere should occupy after you and perpetuate the old name at the Elms, I know you would not leave your child portionless with your own will, and should the like occur by any of those accidents to which human life and human plans are liable, it would make no difference to either my son or myself."

Delamere had listened with a grave and thoughtful look, which his face still wore as he said, "Archdale, Constance is the heiress of my estate, that is a settled thing; but I know not what to say about your son. I had a great opinion of him once; he seemed to be a good boy; handsome and clever enough to take any woman's fancy, and I could not have wished a better husband for my Constance; but all that appears to be changed. They tell me he has taken to the company of those seditious speech-making fellows that fill our colleges now-a-days—braggarts and swaggerers every one of them, unworthy of the name of students, and fit for nothing but troubling the country. I'll warrant it was some of them that waylaid old Yardley, the storekeeper, when he was going to Marble Head to get out of the Custom House some goods he had bought cheap from one who was afraid to pay duty for them himself. The creature is fond of bargains, you see. Well, they set upon him a mile or so from Hadley, took the Custom House warrant out of his pocket, tore it to shreds, and made him give three cheers for liberty on the open road."

"I don't think it did the old man much harm to give three cheers for liberty," said Archdale, smiling; "but my son and his fellow-students had no hand in that absurd transaction; it was one of the performances of Hiram Hardhead and his Green Mountain Boys."

"They deserve to be banished the province," said Delamere; but here the room door was suddenly opened, and a tall, muscular youth, with a handsome Irish face and a strong Irish accent, named Denis Dargan, and known to the neighbourhood as the squire's best man, stepped in with, "Here's a paper for yer honour; the postmaster sint it wid his compliments, becas the mail-bags is just come in, an' his son give it to me among the stubbles yonder, where we're all winnowin' the wheat."

"Thank you, Denis," said Delamere, taking the paper; 'tis Governor Gage's handwriting," he con-

tinued, glancing at the cover, and then opening it. "'Rivington's Gazette!' there must be something particular here; you are in time for the news, Archdale."

"Rivington's Gazette" was the government organ for all the American provinces; and there was something particular in it that day, for the first of the print on which Delamere's eye lighted was a strong article setting forth the misdeeds of the students of Harvard College, and more especially those of Sydney Archdale, including his raid on the revenue officers in the widow's house, and ample quotations from the young man's speeches in public and private.

Delamere read it quickly and silently; and the expression of mingled wrath and astonishment in his face almost prepared his friend for what was to follow as he handed him the paper, saying, "Look at that, Archdale, and tell me if you believe it to be true."

"For the most part I believe it is," said Archdale, when he had glanced over the article.

"And knowing that, you have asked my consent to such a fellow paying his addresses to my only child!" cried Delamere.

"Hold! hold! Sydney has compromised himself by his opposition to arbitrary and unjust laws, which, being such, no man is morally bound to obey. We cannot expect the prudence of age from hot and headlong youth; but he has done nothing for him or for me to be ashamed of," said Archdale, with a look of quiet pride that fairly fired up the master of the Elms.

"What, sir!" he cried, almost springing from his chair; "do you call his speech at the meeting in Faneuil Hall nothing? I tell you, it is downright treason. Do you call raising an armed force and attacking the king's revenue officers in the discharge of their duty nothing? I tell you it is open rebellion."

"Suppose it is treason and rebellion, both are right or wrong according to their cause; no tyrant was ever overthrown or nation liberated without them; no patriot ever yet escaped their imputation. William Tell was a rebel against the Austrian governor, who set up his cap to be bowed to in the market-place. The Protestant princes of Germany were rebels against Charles V, who wanted to burn them and their subjects for heresy. Our own great-grandfathers were rebels against Charles I, who wanted to tax the English nation without the consent of their representatives, as George III wishes to do by us," said Archdale.

"Our great-grandfathers must answer for themselves; if they could reconcile their consciences to rebellion, I cannot, and will not, for all the Whiggish sophistry that any man may talk. Your son's doings are, no doubt, according to your principles,"—Delamere was growing hotter every minute,—"but I detest and abhor everything of the kind, and I tell you frankly that he shall never have my consent to speak or correspond with my daughter."

"The girl might speak and correspond with worse," said Archdale; his calm face had a look of sore displeasure now.

"Do you mean to insinuate, sir, that my innocent child would ever stoop to disgrace herself and her family? I must say that is worthy of a Whig!" and Delamere laughed sneeringly.

"A long life's acquaintance has let you know me better than to think so." Archdale was himself



again. "What I meant, not to insinuate, but to say, was that she might chance to marry a less worthy man than my son. His morals are without reproach, his honour is without stain; man never loved a woman more truly and devotedly than Sydney loves your daughter; and all that can be said against him is, that he loves his country too; which is not wonderful, seeing he bears the name of one who fell fighting for liberty on a foreign soil, the gallant and accomplished Sir Philip, and of one who died for it on an English scaffold, the noble and virtuous Algernon."

"You had always arguments enough at your fingers' ends, Archdale; but you will never reconcile me to such a match, nor my Constance either, she has too much respect for her father's principles, and I may say her own, to think of marrying a captain of rebels, for those Minute Men are nothing else. I know she has a mind above the like;" and the master of the Elms looked proud in his turn.

"Stop, my friend, there are none of us old heads that can truly promise for young people and their weddings." It was an injudicious speech of the prudent Archdale, for it roused a lurking fear in Delamere's breast that made him furious for the time.

"Sir, I understand you," he cried; "those who would insult their sovereign in public meetings, and trample on the authority of parliament, would not scruple to turn a child against her father; but I defy your son's arts, and yours too. My Constance has been educated in sound principles; she will not break her father's heart for all your crafty endeavours, for I tell you, and it is my last word on the subject, I would rather see the girl in her grave—though I have no other child—than married to such a man as your son."

"You scarcely mean what you say, Delamere; you will think better of it hereafter; in the meantime, let us part in peace;" and Archdale rose and held out his hand.

"No, sir," cried the angry master of the Elms, stepping back; "I will never shake the hand of a man who has threatened me with the disobedience and desertion of my own child, to be brought about by his—that is all I have to say."

Archdale made no reply; the blow on his heart was too heavy and unexpected for remonstrance, and without a word or sign he turned away, found the outer door open, and walked quickly from the house.

## A TRIP TO PALMYRA AND THE DESERT.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM WRIGHT, B.A., OF DAMASCUS.

### I.

THE Bible tells us Solomon built Tadmor in the Wilderness, and classic authors tell us that Zenobia had her home there. History, sacred and secular, links the city inseparably with that magnificent king of Israel, unrivalled in wisdom and barbaric splendour, and with that desert queen and peerless woman, whose regal attributes and personal accomplishments were as remarkable as the brilliance of her reign. The city comes on the stage of history in the blaze of glory that surrounds the most wondrous of Oriental kings, and after many centuries of splendid obscurity, quits the stage of history in the meteoric glare that accompanied the most wondrous of Oriental queens.

And yet history, careful to preserve the remembrance of cities of which no vestige remains, has been so reticent about Tadmor, that the wonderful ruins lately discovered almost alone perpetuate her glory. Her chronicles are written in stone, in graceful villa and spacious palace, in massive mausoleum and mighty temple, in vistas of airy colonnades and crescents, seen through triumphal arches, and in a thousand monuments of genius and taste, battered and hurled about as the playthings of time, but conserving in every feature the blush and freshness of youth.

Like a shrinking beauty, Tadmor sits in solitary grandeur behind her own desert mountains; and those who would see her in her calm retreat must leave the beaten tracks of tourists, and cross "the great and terrible desert." During ten years I have seen many tourists arrive at Damascus, eager as devotees to gaze on this queen of ruins, but, owing to the expense, danger, and general hardships of the journey, but few of the multitude have been permitted to look upon her beauty. Of these few, fewer still have had free leisure to become acquainted with all her charms.

I may consider myself the most fortunate of tourists, in that I have twice succeeded in visiting Palmyra under the most favourable circumstances, and without stepping far out of the circle of my professional duties. I shall take my readers by my latest route, through a region seldom explored, and by an easy path, with water at regular intervals.

As our first trip to Palmyra was made in the ordinary prescribed manner, we shall get it out of the way as quickly as possible, and only refer to it again to illustrate or supplement our second. It consisted of long, weary marches, day and night, along the middle of an uninteresting plain, running in an eastern direction, with mountains like walls running all the way on each side. We left Damascus on the 20th March, 1872, and reached Palmyra in four days, but as the road was monotony itself, I came back to Damascus at one stretch in about two days, and my mare trotted into Damascus almost as fresh as she trotted out of Palmyra.

From the time of our first trip to Palmyra, the people of Karyetein, where we spent a night, never ceased to solicit us to establish a school among them, and I had promised to revisit them in the spring of 1874. That spring the Bedawin plundered the whole eastern borders of Syria. Caravan after caravan with Bagdad merchandise was swept off into the desert. The British Bagdad post, sacred in the most troublous times, had been seven times plundered, the letters had been torn open and strewed over the plain, and the postman, without camel or clothes, left to perish, or find his way as he best could to human habitation. Spearmen, like swarms of locusts from the East, spread over Jebel Kalamoun, and having slain the shepherds, and stripped any men or women who fell in their way, they drove before them all the flocks and herds of the region. Feeble

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fanaticism held sway in the city, and absolute anarchy reigned in the rural districts; and so great was the terror of the peasantry, that though they were actually starving, they could not move from their villages, except in large armed bodies, and even thus they sometimes fell a prey to the Ishmaelites.

In this state of the country I had almost given up my promised visit, when two daring explorers, the Honourable C. F. P. Berkeley and wife, arrived in Damascus. Coolness and courage had carried them safely through Petra and Karak, and all the trans-Jordanic regions, where they were sometimes beset by savage and furious mobs. Their faces were set towards Tadmor, and the prospect of danger only gave a keener interest to the projected tour. A common interest drew us together, and I was able to avail myself of their escort and pleasant society, in return for a little topographical knowledge and an acquaintance with the people and their ways. The season was already far advanced for making the journey to Palmyra, and so we resolved to start at once.

On the 25th May, 1874, we left Straight Street at 9 o'clock a.m. As we passed out of the city we saw green vegetables beginning to make their appearance in the markets, and jaundiced-looking apricots, ripened in the baths, were being eagerly purchased and greedily devoured by the famine-stricken people. A little beyond Thomas' Gate, where once stood St. Thomas' Church, the site of which is now unknown, we turned out of the straight road to Palmyra into a shady lane to the left. We had planned our route through the highlands of Jebel Kalamoun, that we might visit the interesting towns and mission schools of that region, while escaping the great heat of the plains. On most maps of Syria the Antilebanon appears as a huge caterpillar, laid side by side and parallel with Mount Lebanon; but the Antilebanon consists of a series of mountain ranges, some of which run parallel with Lebanon and sink into the Great Hums plain, while some twist off in a more eastern direction and shoot out into the desert. The most eastward and desertward of these ranges rises into Hermon at the one end, and sinks into Palmyra at the other; and the part of this latter range which lies north-east of Damascus is known generally as Jebel Kalamoun. Our shady lane through the orchards of Damascus was overhung with great spreading walnuts trellised with vines, and on either side were apricots beaded with new fruit, and thickets of pomegranate with scarlet blossoms bursting forth like handfuls of crumpled silk. Half-an-hour from the city we crossed the Taura\* (Pharpar), a river of Damascus, a little below where a cotton manufactory was established with English machinery and under English superintendence. The English workmen, however, found great difficulty in getting their wages, and they were kept in unhealthy lodgings until three out of four died, and the survivor returned home broken in heart and constitution, and with experiences sufficient to deter others from being allured into similar service by the prospect of high wages. Beyond the bridge we met a few sacks of new barley, artificially ripened, carried on the backs of donkeys into the city; and we saw fields of barley pulled and left on its side to ripen, that it might be in time for the famine prices.

An hour from Damascus we passed through Barzey, a Moslem village, where there is the Sanctuary of Abraham, and where the people still talk familiarly of "King Ibrahim," though the names of Sultan Selim and Salah-ed-Din (Saladin) have already almost passed from local tradition. Here we struck into the mountains to the left by a pass up a gorge, parallel to the sublime gorge of the Barada, by which tourists enter Damascus, and much resembling it, but on a smaller scale. Our road was up a fine mountain torrent through which our horses splashed and stumbled. Once a Damascus Moslem was riding up the same gorge, and he got his leg broken by the falling of his horse. On dying, he left a sum of money to make a road through the pass, to prevent the repetition of such accidents as cost him his life. The money, after many years, was unearthed by an English engineer, but it passed into Moslem hands once more; and in the summer, when the pass was bone dry, a road was made along the bottom of the ravine. The fact of the Turks having made a road themselves was published in the papers, and people wondered. The road was made chiefly of dry dust, pressed down by the hands and bare feet, and though it had only been one year made when we passed through, not a vestige of it remained. In less than half an hour we issued from the gorge at Máraha, a Moslem village, clinging to a bare rock overhanging the water. We turned up the western side of the ridge through which we had cut, through a narrow valley full of fragrant walnuts and white-stemmed poplars, and green corn as high up as the soil was watered, and no higher, calling to mind the words of the prophet, "And everything shall live whither the river cometh" (Ezekiel xlvii. 9). We lunched in a lovely green meadow under the trees near the village Et-Tell, and then continued our course in the track of the water past Menin, a village which, like Et-Tell, contains many remains of ancient buildings. This part of our route was charming. We had left the steaming city behind, and we were continually getting up out of the heated plain. Here and there we had pleasant shade, and everywhere the sparkling water murmured past us, and every vista and every eminence supplied pictures of blending landscapes, such as are rarely seen even in Syria.

Here our party was broken up. We had agreed to spend the first night at Máloula, but my companions' guide had directed the tents to Saidenâya, and so I had to ride on alone, as I had arranged to visit the mission schools of Yabroud and Nebk on the following day. I passed the fortress convent of Saidenâya, perched on a high rock, up which hewn steps lead to a small door, the only entrance. This convent contains a crowd of ignorant, idle women, and is famous for a picture painted by St. Luke, which distils a fluid very efficacious for eye complaints and for replenishing the coffers of the convent. The picture was once stolen, but in the hands of the thief it became changed into flesh, and continues so to this day. I once tried hard to see this miraculous picture. I urged the cruelty of keeping a thing of flesh and blood so closely confined, and the advantages that might be expected from a little fresh air. I was also very liberal, and tried to bribe my hostess, who was not fair, but it was all in vain. I could not see it and live, and so I was spared the sight. This miracle has attained to an antiquity respectable in these days. Nearly two hundred years ago Henry Maundrell

\* In the May number of the "Leisure Hour" in 1873, I gave my reasons for this identification.

found the fame of the picture and the morality of the establishment about the same as they are now. But they have a new miracle to boast of in the convent of Sainenāya. In 1860 many Christians took refuge in the convent, and they were there for a time in a state of siege. There is no well in the convent, and only a cistern in which the rain-water from the roof is preserved. But, wonderful as it may seem, the water in the cistern swelled up to the brim, and overflowed in a stream all the time that the wicked Druzes hovered about the convent. Could I disbelieve the miracle when I was told of it by a lady who actually saw it take place, and pointed out to me the very spot? It is much to be regretted that this miracle took place in such an out-of-the-way convent, but even thus, I have no doubt it will yet receive the fame it merits.

My path lay along the eastern side of the mountain range on which Sainenāya stands. The range has a sea-washed crest, showing in its length a clear tide line. Though the mountains were bare and without vegetation, there were in several places little flocks of goats, attended by very small half-naked shepherds, burnt brown. The red plain had been scratched in several places, but the "thin ears, blasted with the east wind," showed that, as on the six previous years, the crop of the region was about to be a complete failure. In this solitary ride I met only one party of men. They were village recruits, who had been taken by conscription. Handcuffs in Syria are of a most primitive kind. A piece of a tree, eighteen inches long and eight inches in diameter, is split up; a place is hollowed out across the split, and the two wrists being placed in the groove, the two pieces are nailed together with large spikes. Each recruit had his hands nailed up between heavy pieces of wood, and the party was being driven into Damascus by one mounted dragoon. The sticks had been so unskillfully fitted that some of their wrists were bleeding, and they were all lame and hungry. He would be a real benefactor who would supply Turkey with a few thousand pairs of civilised handcuffs. In less than three hours I turned to the left, through a narrow cleft in the mountain, and then wound up and down its western side till I reached the Greek Catholic convent of Máloula. About eight o'clock I reached the small iron portal, which opened to my first tap, and I found myself in a quadrangle with a two-storey range of rooms running all round it. Instead of nuns, as at Sainenāya, a great drove of mountain cows were housed in the court at night, and the place was kept by two agricultural monks, and two "stout daughters of the plough." My servant, who had preceded me, had my bed erected in an aerial cell, and the kindly old priest brought me a bottle of native wine, and what was better still, fresh eggs and milk. It is only fair to state that the priest seemed to value more highly than I did this "wine of Helbon," which maintains in its neighbourhood the pre-eminence it held in the days of Ezekiel. In exact ratio as the contents of the bottle went down, the spirits of my entertainer rose, and till a very late hour he poured out stories of the place, natural and supernatural, until I was fairly driven into the land of dreams.

Next morning I was on the roof of the convent when the first shafts of rosy light shot over the eastern mountains. The upper convent stands near the edge of a fearful precipice, on a ledge of rock

which seems driven wedge-like into a deep break in the mountain. Creeping close to the edge of the precipice, I looked over, and beneath me I saw the most picturesque town in Syria, perhaps the most remarkable in some respects in the world. The cliffs rise several hundred feet over the village, and the houses stick like swallows' nests one above the other about the bases of the cliffs. The flat roofs looked like the steps of a great ladder up the side of the mountain. The Greek convent beneath, Mar Thekla, is wedged in under a huge ledge of impending mountain, and a door opens out of the living rock. The arch of the roof is supported by a slender column, which seems to mock the crushing weight above. The deep valley below is full of huge blocks that have fallen from the mountain, and the pendent cliffs are cracked and fissured, and seem ready to follow into the ravine. As I stood on a half-detached ledge that overhung the houses, I almost held my breath, lest the huge mass should plunge madly down among the human nests, bringing instant death to hundreds.

The scene was lovely as well as strange. Behind, the red hill curved around like a vast amphitheatre, and on either side the mountain cliffs stood up like the sides of a great portal. In front, the gardens opened out like a fan from the mouth of the gorge. These gardens, green with the many shades of walnut, and poplar, and bay, and cypress, and growing corn, terminated abruptly in a flat chocolate plain, around which rose tawny hills, in some places bleached white. Eagles soared, and wild pigeons swarmed about the cliffs above; and the air beneath was full of swallows, which darted in and out under the projecting ledges; and there were several families of Syrian nuthatches—some of them rare specimens, even in Syria—which swung and sputtered about the brows of the cliffs.

The communication between the upper convent and the village is difficult. On either side of the wedge on which the convent stands, and against which the houses are stuck, there is a rent or deep fissure separating it from the mountain. I descended through the rent on the south-western side by a narrow path with stone steps cut in the rock. I found the people of Máloula as interesting as their village. They speak the ancient Syriac language, though most of them can also speak a little Arabic, but with a Syriac accent. Máloula is the centre of a group of villages where the language of the conquering Arabs has not yet completed its triumph. In Bukha and Jub-'Adin, neighbouring villages, the people are all Moslems, and all speak Syriac, so that while the religion of the prophet has prevailed, the language of the people has conquered the conquerors. In Máloula it is a drawn battle. Many of the people are still Christians, and most of them hold by their own old language. In all other villages in Syria, the language of the Koran is the language of the people.

I ascended to the convent through the northern rent, in the bottom of which runs the stream of the village. The walls rose to a height of two hundred feet on either side, showing a very narrow strip of sky above. The cliffs are full of chambers, and closets opening off chambers, and there are hundreds of tombs all chiselled out of the solid rock. The village is of high antiquity, as the Greek inscriptions reach back to the first century of our era; and the rock-hewn chambers, which served for human habi-

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tations before the people learned from the swallows their present style of architecture, point doubtless to a very remote period.

Having thoroughly explored the village, and paid for my lodging as at an inn, I started for Yabroud. In a quarter of an hour I had got up out of the amphitheatre or basin at the bottom of which Máloula stands, and just as I gained the level plateau I came on a party of very savage-looking men sitting round an artificial tank of stagnant water. They were clothed in black sheepskin coats, with the woolly side out, and they were armed with clubs and swords and skin-covered shields. They were a party of Kurds on their way to Damascus, and just such a party as constantly murder and rob solitary travellers. We measured each other's strength, and saluted politely. A ride of three hours over swelling hills, with a range of slate-coloured mountains on the right, and a wide red plain stretching away to distant mountains on the left, brought us to a gorge in the mountain choked with vegetation. Beyond the gorge, high over the green, rose a curious conical hill, white as snow, called Ras el Kowz. At the base of this hill stands Yabroud, the Jambrouda which sent a bishop to the Council of Nice. The place still continues to be the residence of a bishop. I entered the town past a beautiful fountain which pours its wealth of waters through the village and gardens, creating a little paradise among the parched hills. The sides of the gorge contain many ancient and unused tombs hewn in the rock. Some are high up in the face of the cliffs, and must have been difficult of access at all times, while others are level with the ground, and are spoken of as shops. In one of these some gypsies were living as I passed, calling to mind the demoniac of Gergesa.

The first thing that strikes one on entering Yabroud is the appearance of the people. The men in this and the other villages about are as a rule tall, well-built, and handsome. Even the Christians here have an air of independence about them such as one seldom meets with in Syrian Christians. The women are in still more striking contrast with their sisters elsewhere throughout the country. They are tall, red-cheeked, healthy, and comfortable-looking, and though seldom beautiful, they have nothing of the gipsy appearance of the women in the south and east, nor the sickly waxen complexion of Damascus beauties. They have a general resemblance to the women of Nazareth, but they have more *stamina* and less prudery than the maidens of the pitcher. As we pass along we see them standing at their doors, with big, rosy children in their arms, or grinding at the mill, or spinning woollen yarn with a spindle; and one not unfrequently hears from them a hearty ringing laugh, such as might resound from a harvest-field at home. At the time of my visit, however, all cheeks were pale enough, and laughter and gladness had departed, and I started on entering the school at the pinched and hungry look of the children. There were thirty names on the roll, but only fifteen pupils in attendance. The explanation was brief and sad. Famine was in the district. Five or six bad harvests had followed in succession; madder root, which is here largely cultivated, had become almost unsaleable, owing to a German chemist having discovered a mineral substitute; the flocks of the villagers had been swept off by the Arabs, who had also intercepted their supplies; and the Turks insisted on having their taxes in full, though

giving nothing in return. I was assured that there were not ten bushels of wheat in the village of 3,000 inhabitants, and the people were living chiefly on wild roots and vegetables. Fifteen of the scholars were on the mountains and in the glens, competing with the goats and gazelles for something to drive away hunger. One-half of the children only went on these expeditions at a time, and the fifteen who were in the school were making a meal of bean bread and *hashish*, which consisted for the most part of mint from the stream and rhubarb from the mountain. They were like a flock of hungry kids feeding on clover.

One hour beyond Yabroud I entered Nebk through the mouldering huts of Ibrahim Pasha's camp. The great Egyptian general, seeing the splendid appearance of the villagers, established his camp where the soldiers could have the best medicines—good air and good water. During his occupation of Syria, the villagers were safe from the Bedawin. The Turks have learned nothing from his example, in either the arts of war or peace.

The village Nebk crowns a high hill, or *Nabk*, and is crowned itself by the residence of a Syrian Catholic bishop, whose chief business, like that of his mitred brother in Yabroud, seems to be the suppression of education. Hunger was pinching also in Nebk, but the Protestants, having learned principles of thrift with the gospel, were all in circumstances of comfort. Fifty pupils were in the school, and though all on short allowance, they had not the hidebound, hunger-pinched appearance of the children of Yabroud.

Nebk had suffered severely from the two great enemies of the land—the Bedawin and the Turks. On my previous visit I entered the village just a few minutes before the Bedawin made a *gazzo* up to the very entrance. They carried off a few camels laden with grain, and left the drivers without a garment. Great was the excitement in the village. People rushed to the roofs of their houses and screamed in concert, "He that has a sword, and he that has a gun, let him forth against the Arabs;" but while all screamed, none went forth, and the Bedawin swept round the base of the hill and carried off their booty unmolested. A short distance from the place two miserable women were gathering brushwood for fuel. Every day they took their two donkeys out in the morning, and returned in the evening with their loads, which they sold, and honestly maintained themselves and their animals. They had nothing in the world but the two donkeys, which were little larger than goats. The Bedawin of romance would have spared such objects, but the Bedawin of the desert rushed on the donkeys with a yell of joy, stripped the ragged garments from the women, beating them when they resisted, and left them barefooted and without a fig-leaf, to find their way back in shame to the village. Never, perhaps, did romance take greater liberties with truth than when it threw a halo of chivalry round these cut-throats of the desert.

Next morning as I passed out among the high-walled gardens to visit the schools of Deir 'Atiyeh, I came suddenly upon a woman sitting by a little stream and wailing plaintively. Beside her was a little basket of cow's dung which she had gathered for fuel. Her grief was not a surface exhibition to catch sympathy, as no one was near in the early morning. She told me her sad tale. Her husband,

returning with a load of grain from the Euphrates, had been speared by the Bedawin, and she and her children were left destitute.

On reaching the desert once more, I saw a cavalier bearing down furiously upon me. At the distance of a mile I recognised our lady companion, whom I had left at Saidañya two days previously. As I watched an English lady bounding over the desert on a splendid charger, whose neck of thunder swayed hither and thither to her silken touch, I could not help thinking how much Christianity, in its highest types, owes to its contact with Teutonic chivalry.

Deir 'Atiyeh was our rendezvous, and we all converged to the Protestant school. Thence we passed out of the village, and after skirting the gardens for some time, we turned into the desert eastward in a direct line for Tadmor. We had soon to call a halt, for our muleteers were hugging the village, and hanging back, evidently with the object of making a short day, and putting us down at the first convenient village, as they had done the first day.

The halt gave me an opportunity of estimating the magnitude and organisation of our party. Two cavaliers stood out conspicuous from all the others. They were Gazawy, the dragoman, the same who brought "Sheikh Stanley" through "Sinai and Palestine," and a Moslem sheikh brought from Nebk as guide to the expedition. Gazawy is the prince of dragomans; his weakness, perhaps his strength, is to have everything of the best, and always ten times more than enough. The long line of laden mules carried, I believe, provisions for the party for twelve months. Booted and braced, he sat on a splendid horse called the "Steam Engine," as if he were a part of the horse, and viewed the long cavalcade with a smile of pride on his kindly, weather-beaten face. His chief pride and glory that morning was his guide, chosen chiefly on account of his radiant waistcoat. Half a mile from the village this guide lost the road, and led us astray, and fell back to the rear, where he could do no harm. When a village would rise into sight before us, he would suddenly gallop up and declare it was "Sudud;" but as we saw Sudud far down on the plain to the left, we called our guide "Sudud," and groped our way by the aid of an incorrect map. Our course during the day lay north-east over gently undulating ground. On our right was the bare northern shoulder of Kalamoun, which we were rounding, and to our left was the great plain which stretches away to Hums and Hamath. Green spots dotted the red expanse, and marked the sites of such towns as Kara, Hafr, and Sudud, the Zedad of Scripture, one of the border cities of the Land of Promise. That plain once supported the flocks and hosts of the Seleucids, but under the beneficent rule of our Turkish allies, the sites of great cities are marked by wretched huts, and the miserable inhabitants carry their provisions from the Euphrates. We met no travellers, for all who wished to escape the Bedawin travelled under the protection of the darkness. Persian larks, hawks, vultures, and pin-tailed grouse were the only tenants of that desolate region.

A little after midday "Sudud" espied two human beings creeping down from the mountain as if going to cross our path. He immediately gave the alarm, and as there were only two, and they not likely to be Bedawin, he charged direct at them, valiantly brandishing his rusty weapons with all the awkwardness

of a village horseman. Our bandit guard joined in the chase, which was picturesque and exciting, though ludicrous. Sudud kept in advance, and as he became convinced that there were no Bedawin, and no ambuscade, he became more valorous. He would show that although he might not know the way, he was the hero of the party in the hour of danger. But just as he was snatching his laurels, the fate of "vaulting ambition" befell him, for his horse, having had enough of it, stopped short at the edge of a dry river, and Sudud shot over his head to the other side. All cheered and called on Sudud to charge the enemy, but he once more retired to the rear, where he kept guard for the remainder of the day. The Bedawin that we were going to annihilate, turned out to be two gipsy tinsmiths who were stealing down the ravine to the village below when the eagle eye of our Sudud discovered them.

We reached Muhin before sunset, and pitched our camp beside a copious fountain. The water was warm and slightly sulphurous. Few Europeans had passed here before, and the people of the village swarmed about us, more curious than civil. They were Moslems of the surly kind. Muhin stands on a little hill, and on the highest part, west of the houses, there are the remains of an ancient church. The building was about twenty paces long and sixteen paces broad, and from twenty-five to thirty feet high. The circular end of the church was toward the north-west, and from the middle of the side wall on either side, all round the circular end, there were pilasters with pedestals and Corinthian capitals. A piece had fallen out of the circular end, but there still remained seven pilasters on one side and five on the other intact. The church is still very perfect, and is unlike any other building I have seen in Syria. From the top we had a magnificent view of the whole country, from the Wall of Lebanon to the Gate of Palmyra, and we were able to take bearings and mark out our line of march for the morrow.

About two o'clock in the morning we were startled by a horrid din in the village; every human being that could scream screamed; every dog barked to the utmost limit of his capacity; every horse that could make a clatter on the rocks galloped hither and thither. An alarm of Bedawin had been given, and the people were gathering in their flocks for safety, and preparing to defend their threshing floors. As we were close by the threshing floors, we had a fair prospect of seeing play, but we kept our beds till morning, and by the time we were ready to rise the noise had all died away.

The Bedawin, as we found out afterwards, made their attack, but not on Muhin. Every year the people of these regions go to the Hauran during the harvest. The men reap for wages, and their wives and daughters, Ruth-like, glean after them. This having been an unusually bad year, an unusual number of reapers and gleaners had gone to the Hauran. Let me quote the sequel from the "Levant Herald" of 9th July, 1874:—"These poor reapers had amassed 17,000 piasters, and were returning to their starving families. But the Arabs were informed of the easy prey they would find in these unarmed peasants. They waylaid them, and left them hardly a shred to cover their nakedness. The Arabs then swept on unopposed under their leader Sheikh Dabbous, and making a circuit by Sudud, Hawarin, and Karyetein, carried off all the stray flocks and donkeys that came in their way."





[After Loutchonne, by permission of Messrs. Goupil & Co.]

FIRST LESSON IN SKATING.



## BELATED.

A GERMAN GHOST STORY.

ALTHOUGH the morning had been bright and clear, the sky became overcast towards noon, and the wind shifting to the south gave indications of rain. About three o'clock it began to fall. There was no help for it, however; I had lost so much time among the picturesque ruins of Schauenburg that it was already doubtful whether I should arrive at Oppenau by daylight, unless indeed I should fall in with a "fuhrwerk," under which generic term I suppose every possible kind of wheeled carriage is included. "But if I should be belated," I thought to myself, "it will not be the first time, and who knows what new experiences or adventures it may lead to?" So I walked on contentedly.

Turning an angle of the road, I observed before me a man in a black surtout, rather short in the waist and skirts, as if it had been made for his elder brother, with blue trousers turned up about the ankles, and a large straw hat. I soon overtook him, and greeted him in the usual German fashion. He answered cordially, and quickened his pace to keep me company. I slackened mine to accommodate him, and we entered into conversation. He spoke a little English, and told me he was "a physie" and that his "sufferings" were at Oberkirch. It was not a pleasant thing to be a "physie," he said; people sent for him at all hours of the night; they had so little consideration, and the payment of the sufferings (as he rendered "patients") was almost nothing.

"You are not obliged to go," I suggested.

"I cannot refuse," he answered; "I should be held responsible for any consequences that might follow. There is not a greater slave in Africa than a German 'physie' in his own country. This very morning I was called up at three o'clock by a peasant ringing at the door incessantly. 'What do you want, I asked?'"

"A bottle of mixture for tailor Sneck."

"Is he worse?"

"I don't know; he told me to call for it."

"I mixed the draught, and made it pretty strong, for I felt angry. When it was ready, I gave it to the peasant. Would you believe it?—he put it down and said he would call for it by-and-bye; he was going to a town some miles away, and should be passing again a few hours later! A physie is not treated so in England, I should hope?"

With such conversation we beguiled the way, while the clouds gathered overhead, and the first heavy drops of rain began to rustle in the trees around us. We were now passing through a thick forest; before, behind, on every side, the lofty pines arose, shutting out the twilight, and making our road darker at every step. I began to think of shelter.

"Shelter there is none," said my companion;

"scarcely a house of any kind for miles; we must push on to Oppenau."

We pushed on accordingly three or four miles farther; but the clouds grew darker, the rain poured down heavily, and the night closed in.

"What will become of your patient?" I asked; for the physie had told me he was on his way to visit one.

"My patient must take care of himself; probably it was only sausage-indigestion, and he may be well again by this time. I shall remain with you and share your destiny to-night; I could not well do otherwise, for it is so dark that the road is almost as difficult and uncertain now to me as to yourself. We must creep into the first hovel that comes in our way, or wait under the trees until the moon rises and the rain clears off."

At that moment I observed a light—a feeble glimmer, at some distance from us; it was stationary, and came most probably from some cottage window. We went towards it, and found a low range of buildings surrounding a farmyard; there was an open space beyond it, where the timber had been cleared and the land cultivated. The sign over the door, although we did not see it till next morning, bade us welcome to the Golden Pig; and the place was but a beerhouse of the humblest kind, but we rejoiced in it no less than if it had been a "company's" hotel. The principal room in the house served for kitchen, guest-chamber, and other common uses. There was a fire burning on the hearth, to which the haus-frau added some dry logs and branches as we entered, and we sat down by it. The doctor took off his coat and hung it up in the chimney-corner.

"See how it smokes," he said; "I might be said *uide suspendisse vestimenta*, as an offering to the genius of the house for our hospitable reception. I wish the genius may be propitiated by it for the sake of this good woman, who seems to have something very dismal upon her mind, judging by her sighs and exclamations."

The poor woman did indeed appear to be very unhappy; but she spread our table with the best provisions that she had, and wished us a good digestion, yet in a tone so miserable that it was more calculated to spoil our appetite than to improve it.

"What is the matter, dame?" the doctor asked her, kindly; "you seem to have something upon your mind."

"What is the matter?" she replied. "Ah, great things—I am in trouble; alas, my sirs! what a trouble is mine!"

"Tell me what it is about," said the doctor; "perhaps I may be of use to you."

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"No one can be of use to me," she replied; "but kind words are pleasant. I am a widow. I lost my husband by an accident suddenly, three months ago or more. I have carried on this little farm and *schénke* since then by myself; but I shall have to leave it soon; they will take all my pigs, too, and everything I have, and I shall have no livelihood in my old age—Ach weh!"

After a pause she resumed. "My husband always paid his rent to the day; he never failed; we put it away in readiness for the steward, and never touched it for anything else, however badly we might want it. My poor dear man used to keep it tied up in a stocking in a hole behind the chimney. He was very close, and never told even me, his wedded wife, where it was hidden; but I found it out by accident one day, and after that he chose some other place, I know not where. Oh, that I could find it! And the steward was a rogue, and ran away with all the rents; and the last half-year's payment which my husband made is gone with the rest; and now they tell me I must pay it all again."

"Who tells you so?"

"The new steward—a hard man—a cruel man; and I am a stranger to him."

"And have you no receipt for the rent paid?"

"I cannot find it. My poor, dear man is gone, and cannot come back to tell me where he put it. And the money; that is lost also. I have searched everywhere, but in vain; and if they turn me out of this place, some one else, perhaps, will find it, and keep it for his own. Ach weh! Alas! alas!"

It was a hard case, certainly, and I felt very sorry for the poor widow. But what could we do? Her constant sighing, her frequent tears and ejaculations, added little to the cheerfulness of the evening; and as the rain continued to pour down outside also, we resolved to go to rest early, in the hope of starting again at daylight the next morning. In reply to the question of *bed*, the widow told us there was but one bed-chamber in the house—her own. We could have that. We climbed a step-ladder to inspect it. I am not very particular, but the doctor, I suppose, was less so; for while I hesitated, he said it would do very well, and prepared to take possession of it.

"The bed is large enough for two," he remarked, pointing to it, cheerfully.

It was with difficulty I persuaded him that I would rather lie before the fire in the room below upon some sacks which happened to be there; but, after a good deal of argument, it was agreed that I should do so. "The English were an eccentric people," he had heard, "and I must have my own way." The widow did her best to make me comfortable; she had a place for herself in a closet off the common room, to which she was accustomed to retire whenever her bed was wanted for a guest, which rarely happened, so she would be close at hand, she told me, if I should want anything. "But I hope," she added, with a doleful look, "I hope you will not be disturbed during the night."

"Disturbed!" I exclaimed; "how should I?"

"Ah, no! of course not. How, indeed?"

But I saw plainly there was something on her mind, and was resolved to have it out.

#### CHAPTER II.

It was not without some difficulty that I persuaded my hostess to explain the meaning of her dark hints about being disturbed in the night. It was a subject

that she feared to speak about, although it was evident that she would gladly have taken me into her confidence if she had dared to do so. At length she told me, looking about her nervously, that some folks said—and, for her part, she believed it—that there were a certain kind of fairies—little men, or *Kobolds* (that was the name), which came sometimes in the night to houses where there was any trouble. They did no harm unless one meddled with them. She had heard strange noises lately in this room, which was just under where she generally slept, but did not come down to inquire into the cause, nor could she now have spent the night so near it unless I had been there also.

"If anything should come," she said, impressively, "don't notice it; don't speak; don't move. Watch it and follow it with your eyes; observe everything it does, but don't call out nor stir till it is gone."

She sat down by the fireside, shivering, evidently too much alarmed just then to leave the room, although her little bed-place was so near, and separated only by a screen.

"Hans, the miller," she said, "saw one of these people once; it used to come and sweep out the mill and oil the works at night, and do many a handy turn for him; and he used to leave a little milk in a wooden bowl, with a spoon beside it, on the table, and a chair placed ready; and every morning he found the bowl empty and the spoon in it, and nobody had been there but the cat, and of course she wouldn't use a spoon, you know—cats never do. So it was plain the mannikin came there; and besides, Hans watched for him once, and saw him. And I remember hearing of a traveller," she continued, "who came as you might to the mill to ask for a night's lodging in the pouring rain, and because there was no other place for him, they gave him some sacks to lie upon in the common room, as you are going to lie this night. The traveller had his supper, too, as you have had; but he was not satisfied with that, and in the night he got up and drank the milk which had been left upon the table for the—you know what I mean. And after he had lain down again, and was just dropping off to sleep, he saw the door open silently and the—what I told you—entered. It had a big head and broad shoulders and short legs—quite a dwarf, but strong as a bear. And it went about the room, sweeping here and dusting there, and looking into all the drawers and cupboards; and he saw it mend a table, which was broken, with some nails and a hammer, but the hammer never made the slightest sound, although he used it lustily; and I have seen the mended table myself, so it must be true. And when the—little gentleman had done everything, it went to the high chair, which was set ready for it, and climbed up and took the wooden spoon into its hand and wiped its mouth with a duster, and was just going to drink the milk, when it perceived the bowl was empty. It looked surprised at first, but dipped the spoon into the bowl three times and took up nothing, and then dashed it down upon the table in a fury. At last it fixed its eye upon the traveller, who was lying trembling upon the hearth, as you might lie, and down it jumped in an instant, seized him in its great, rough, bony hands; shook him as a cat would shake a mouse, then swung him round against the wall, dashed him upon the floor again, jumped upon him, and would perhaps have killed him, but just then a cock crew, most conveniently, and the little man, with a frightful grimace, rushed away



round the chimney-corner, and was never seen again. The poor traveller was terribly bruised, and though some people would have it it was all a dream, and he had had too much schnapps—because there was an empty bottle in his pocket—and had fallen about and hurt himself, yet he stuck to his own story. And who was likely to know best, I wonder! So if anything should come, just take no notice of it; and if it looks for something to eat," she continued, glancing towards the table, upon which was half a sausage and a slice of bread left, as if by accident, "let it take what it will. Ach himmel! who knows where help may come from? Good-night, my sir; sleep well." With these words the old woman retired slowly and reluctantly, looking round her timidly as she went, and I could hear her sighs and exclamations in the closet long after she had closed the door.

I don't pretend to say how much truth there may have been in the conjecture thrown out as to the condition of the traveller in the good wife's story, his bottle, and his dream; but I can assure the reader most positively, that the circumstance which I am now about to relate was no dream, and cannot be accounted for by any such hypothesis as that above mentioned. I had no flask with me, and had drunk only about a glass and a half of "*halb-bier*," and that was of a kind far more likely to affect the stomach than the head. There was a good fire burning on the hearth; and as the *uida vestimenta* of my friend the *physic*, and my own overcoat, were still hanging up to dry, I put on two or three more logs, and sat for some time watching the flames leap up, and the changing shadows of the garments on the wall, there being no other light in the apartment. At length, growing sleepy, I adjusted my knapsack and the other sacks upon the hearthstone, and lay down.

I slept soundly for two or three hours. When I awoke the fire was still burning, though rather low. The rain had ceased, and the moon, then nearly at the full, shone in through the window, and lighted up everything in the room distinctly, especially at that end of it where I was lying. I took notice of this, and began to wonder what o'clock it might be. My watch was on the table, and I thought I would get up presently and look at it, and also stir the fire; but I felt drowsy, and disinclined to move, and presently the wooden clock in the room began to whirl and creak, and then struck twelve. Turning a little on my hard resting-place, my eye fell for the first time upon a strange figure sitting within a few feet of me in the chimney-corner; its elbow rested upon a small round table, and it seemed to be gazing thoughtfully into the fire; it was quite immovable, and I could hardly persuade myself that I had not mistaken some piece of furniture, a chair perhaps with a coat thrown over it, for a human form; but a more careful inspection satisfied me that such was not the case. I raised myself silently upon my elbow, and watched the figure steadily for a long time. The face was turned away, but it was apparently the form of an old man, dressed in the garb of a German peasant. On its head was a red night-cap; it had knee-breeches unfastened at the knees, and thick coarse stockings, but no shoes; the coat was long and wide in the skirts, and of some dark material. All this I could see distinctly, and I had plenty of time to make my observations, as neither the figure nor I myself moved for several minutes. I reflected that there certainly

had been no other person in the house at the time when it was locked up for the night, but the doctor, the old woman, and myself; and it was equally clear that the house-door had not been opened since then, or I must have been aware of it. What then could this motionless figure mean? Whence had it come? and how had it obtained entrance? I thought of what the old woman had said about "you know what," and remembered her timid glance round the room every time she spoke of it. Could she have anticipated this visitation? and was this really a Kobold, or something else uncanny?

While I was meditating thus, with my eyes steadily fixed upon the object of my speculations, and (I will admit it) of my vague and increasing alarm, it moved; it began to feel in its pocket, as if searching for something; each pocket of the coat was visited in turn, but each appeared to be empty; the only thing produced was an old tin tobacco-box; and that was evidently not the object sought for, for the figure laid it down upon the table with, as I thought, a gesture of perplexity and disappointment.

Presently the figure rose and walked slowly and carefully about the room, handling the chairs and tables as it passed them. I could now see its form more plainly, and my first impressions of it were confirmed. Once it stumbled against a wooden footstool, but did not take any notice of it, and after walking twice round the room disappeared silently in the recess where the step-ladder was, which led to the upper floor. I thought I would follow it, but before I could do so I heard a movement in the widow's closet, and the next moment the door was opened, and she herself appeared, falling forward into the room, with a gasping cry or scream. I ran to help her, and found that she had fainted, or was in a fit. I lighted a candle, brought some water, and did everything I could think of to revive her; then I remembered that there was a doctor in the house, and shouted to him. It was a long time before he heard me, but he appeared at last, and with his assistance the poor woman revived. As soon as she had recovered consciousness, she exclaimed, with a shudder—

"It was he—I saw him!"

"Saw whom?" I asked.

"My husband!"

She was greatly agitated, and could not be calmed or pacified.

"My husband!" she repeated; "I saw him, saw him, saw him!"

The doctor told her she had been dreaming.

"Dreaming!" she exclaimed; "but I was awake. I heard a noise; I got up and looked through the door, between the boards, and I saw him—saw him! This good sir saw him too. You were in the room with him," she continued, appealing to me, "and you must have seen him."

She then described the figure, its costume, height, and general appearance, exactly as I had observed it.

"It was my husband," she repeated, "in his best clothes; any one who knew him when he was alive would have recognised him; and without his shoes, too, just as he used to sit before the fire on a Sunday evening in that chair. It was he—I saw him—Ach weh! it was he if I should never speak another word!"

After some considerable time she grew more calm. "Ah, well!" she said, "time will show. A day or

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two hence perhaps we shall know what this apparition means; it did not come for nothing. But the gentlemen have been disturbed; I am sorry for it; it is my affair, not theirs; I will go to my little room. I beg the gentlemen's pardon; they must not be troubled, but go to sleep again; only I will have my lamp lighted and my Bible, the large one off the drawers. Think not of me. I will pass the night waking, but in silence. I will disturb no one any more."

We begged her to come near the fire, and to sit in our company awhile, till she should have recovered from her alarm, but she refused. She had been too troublesome already, she said. The doctor persuaded her, however, to take a few drops of something good to compose her; and having done so, she went away to her little room and shut the door. The doctor murmured something about "his usual destiny—called up, of course;" and ascended yawning to his bed-chamber, and I was left alone.

I stood by the fire pondering over what had occurred, and looking from time to time over my shoulder with a creeping sensation, expecting to see the chair occupied, as before, by the silent and mysterious figure. Whenever I moved or made any noise, I fancied the sound was echoed or repeated behind me; but that, of course, was only imagination. At length I turned briskly round, resolved to shake off this morbid state of nervousness, and looked about me; and now my attention was riveted instantly upon an object which had hitherto escaped my notice. There, upon the little round table close to where I was standing, lay the tin tobacco-box which the phantom had taken from his pocket. I was quite certain that no such box had been there in the earlier part of the evening, and that it had been placed there, as I had seen with my own eyes, by the figure which the old woman had identified as the ghost of her husband. Was this the ghost of his tobacco-box, or was it a reality? I looked at it with a feeling almost of awe, and put out my hand two or three times before I could summon resolution to touch it. At last I did so. It was a very ordinary box, with the initials H. S. rudely engraved upon it. The late landlord's name was Heinrich Stoffel! This, then, had been his box, and here was tangible evidence of the strange visitation which I had witnessed. Had he come back from the grave on purpose to leave this box upon the table? It was empty; did he want it filled? Even that thought crossed my mind, for I was in a matter-of-fact humour, notwithstanding my nervousness; and I remembered the bread and sausage left by the widow for "anything" that might happen to come. The Kobold, too, had been particular about his milk—how about the tobacco? But no; graver thoughts returned quickly. Yet this box must have some meaning in it: the receipt for the rent—could it be in here? There might be a false bottom to the box! I examined it, and pushed and twisted it, but could discover nothing. I turned it over and over a dozen times, and searched carefully for some secret fastening, but in vain. The only thing I noticed was a kind of figure something like a gravestone, scratched as with the point of a penknife, upon the bottom of the box. The more I examined this the more I felt persuaded that it was no accidental scratch, but was intended to represent something. There was a mark across the middle, and at one side of this mark a sort of flourish like the letters J. S., as if another of the Stoffels

had placed his initials there, or it might be that these were numerals, instead of letters, intended to indicate the number 18. I had almost left off conjecturing what these marks could mean, when my eye fell upon the hearthstone at my feet, and it occurred to me that the outline of this stone was somewhat similar to that of the figure on the box; there was a crack across it, too, which corresponded with the irregular scratch above mentioned. This set me thinking once more. I compared the two outlines, and was confirmed in my impression as to their resemblance, but there was no mark to represent the J. S. or the 18, whichever it might be. The floor around the hearthstone was formed of narrow bricks placed on edge; I counted these, beginning at the crack in the stone, and found that the eighteenth was concealed by a large wicker basket containing firewood, which apparently was seldom moved. I moved it, however, and swept away the dust and dirt from underneath it. Again I counted the bricks, and a very short inspection of the eighteenth in order showed me that it was loose. I lifted it; dust and rubbish underneath; that too I removed, and was rewarded with the discovery of a small jar containing some papers and a bag of coin. I cannot describe my feelings, as, without lifting the jar from the place of its concealment, I replaced the brick, covered it again with the basket, and sat down before the fire to watch till morning.

Soon after daylight began to appear the doctor came down; but I said nothing to him, for I felt that this was a matter which concerned the widow only, and that the less it was talked about in the neighbourhood the better. He called up the old woman, spoke kindly to her about her indisposition, and departed, having, as he said, "sufferings" to visit, who would be wondering what had become of their "physic." When he was gone, I drew the widow to the fire-place, showed her the loosened brick in the pavement, took out the jar, and bade her examine its contents. She recognised the bag in a moment; it was one which she had made for her husband. In it, among other papers, the receipt for the rent was discovered, an IOU from a neighbour for a small debt, and three or four pieces of gold. I afterwards showed her the box, and explained by what steps I had been led to the discovery of the bag.

"Ach weh!" she exclaimed; "my poor dear man! it was his box; he always carried it about with him; I found it in his pocket—his best coat pocket, after he was dead, but it was empty, and I left it there. And he came back last night because I was in trouble to show me where he had hidden the bag. Oh, may he rest well in his grave henceforth! I shall have a house over my head now, as long as I live. I hope he will have nothing more to trouble him, and bring him here again. Oh, it's an awful thing to have the dead coming to and fro in this way. But he'll never come again, I dare say, now his mind's at rest."

Soon afterwards she called me upstairs into her chamber; there were her husband's coat and breeches, the same which I had seen worn by the apparition, lying upon the bed. "See," she said, "he went to his own box to get them out; he knew where to find them; he couldn't take them with him when he went away again, but he didn't stop to fold them up. I always used to do that for him, and . . . it's like old times."

I left the house that day under a full persuasion that I had seen a ghost. But there was something grotesque in the idea of a spirit coming from the other world, going to his chest, and, with a marked sense of propriety, putting on his clothes before making his appearance in public, and then taking them off, and not stopping to fold them up and put them away. And as I walked on I could not help thinking whether the events of the past night were capable of any other and more natural interpretation. I came to the following conclusion. The doctor, after retiring to rest, felt cold; he had left the greater part of his garments down below before the fire; he got up and searched his chamber for some extra covering; the box in which the old man's clothes were kept was unlocked, and he drew them forth to lay upon his bed. During the night the old woman's story recurred to him in his dreams; he got up in his sleep (being perhaps a little under the influence of opium), which it was evident he carried with him, put on the old man's clothes as if they had been his own, and came downstairs. After a vain search in his pockets and about the room for something which he seemed to think had been mislaid, he went up to bed again, entirely unconscious of all that had occurred. The marks upon the tobacco-box were a kind of *memoria technica* which the old man had made for himself when he first deposited his treasure in the new hiding-place, and the production of the box itself was, of course, a mere accident arising out of the doctor's dream. The doctor was the "ghost." If this explanation is not satisfactory, I can think of no other.

T. M. S.

#### OPEN SPACES AND RESTING-PLACES.

IN an admirable letter which appeared in the "Times," the Rev. Harry Jones, pleading for the establishment of an open garden in St. George's-in-the-East, pointed attention to a long disused churchyard planted with trees, and only separated by a gaol-like wall, "high, spiked, and strong," from an old Wesleyan burying-ground, also disused; and he suggested the pulling down of the middle wall of partition between the dead Churchmen and the dead Nonconformists, and the conversion of the area (something more than an acre) which they now occupy into a well-ordered garden. He looks forward to seeing, in place of the mouldering memorials of the dead, a cheerful resort for the living, laid out in flower-beds and lawns, and dotted with shadow-casting trees, which shall afford a grateful retreat from the hot and gritty streets to a population who for the most part are situated some two miles distant from the nearest spot available for the enjoyment of fresh air and recreation. Almost synchronous with the appeal of the Rev. Mr. Jones, there was published another and kindred appeal from Miss Octavia Hill, recommending, on grounds equally politic and humane, the purchase of the Swiss Cottage Fields, a tract of land lying north of Marylebone, one of the largest parishes in London—land which, if it be not soon secured, will be certainly covered with acres of villas, and lost to the public for ever. They are the nearest fields to the heart of the capital to be found anywhere. "There the may still grows; there thousands of buttercups crown the slopes with gold; there, best of all, as you ascend, the hill lifts you

out of London, and will always lift you out of it, for far away the view stretches over blue distances to the ridge where Windsor stands." These fields, Miss Hill tells us, "may be bought now, or they may be built on;" and she asks, "Which is it to be?" We heartily hope this question will be answered as Miss Hill would have it answered; meanwhile the answer should not be long delayed, because land in the outskirts of this great city increases in value even faster than do the finest vintages in the wine-vaults, and what is obtainable now on liberal terms may not be obtainable at all a year or two hence. Some thousands of pounds, we learn, have been already subscribed for the purchase of part of these fields, and there seems reason to hope that ere long the question of Miss Hill will be decided favourably, and Marylebone shall have its park.

These appeals, which we would heartily second, we shall venture to supplement with one of our own. What sufficient reason can any one adduce why Lincoln's Inn Fields should not be thrown open as a public breathing-ground? If a single acre is an object of importance in St. George's-in-the-East, and the Swiss Cottage Fields would be so great a boon to Marylebone, how important must it not be that the crowded denizens who inhabit the purlieus of Holborn, Clare Market, Fleet Street, and the Strand should be free to enjoy the advantages that would be afforded by the several acres of Lincoln's Inn's broad area. In this case there is nothing that stands in the way; all that is wanted is the concurrence of the lawyers, benchers, and others who inhabit the square. It was at their instigation exactly a hundred and forty years ago that this large space of ground, which up to 1735 had been the recreation-ground of the citizens, was enclosed. There was reason enough for enclosing it then, because it was the resort of roughs and rascals, and the almost nightly scenes of robbery, of mob-rioting, and brutalities of all sorts. But now that the people is no longer a mob, the necessity for their exclusion no longer exists. The Act of Parliament of 1735 should be repealed; the dwellers in the square should surrender their right to keep the public out of it; the care of the garden should be entrusted to a couple of wardens, and it should be thrown open to everybody. The advantage to the neighbourhood would be incalculable; the inconvenience to the residents would turn out to be *nil*, while if the square were crossed by diagonal pathways, the distance from Holborn to Clare Market, and by-and-by to the new Inns of Court, and also from Queen Street to the New Hall and Library, would be shortened more than a third, to the no small satisfaction of pedestrians. There are many other of the London squares which might be thrown open to the public, for the same reasons, and which would be thrown open were they situated in any other capital in Europe; but with us, so strong are the prejudices of class and the force of vested interests, that it is perhaps vain to expect to make head against them for years to come.

Allied to the subject of Open Spaces is that of Seats and Resting-Places. Looking to the thousands of strangers who are always perambulating London for pleasure, and to the tens of thousands of natives who are everlastingly traversing both city and suburbs, it is astonishing to note the almost utter absence of seats on which a weary wanderer may rest himself. Save in the parks, there is hardly one

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to be found. You may walk for miles in any direction countryward, and wander about the whole day without a chance of sitting down to rest your weary limbs. We often see the poor penniless tramp from the country, footsore and staggering with fatigue, but we do not see him sitting down to rest. If we see him resting at all it is prostrate on the ground, simply because there is literally no place for him to sit. In the place of seats we too commonly find spikes. We pass long lines of handsome villas on the suburban high roads, and see the spaces of garden ground in front of them railed off with iron rails. The rails are inserted in stone slabs, and on these there is room enough for a weary tramp to sit, but lest he should be tempted to do so, a row of sharp spikes, some three inches high, and about as far asunder, are ranged ready to receive him. It was not always so. We can recall the London of fifty—nay, of nearly sixty—years ago, at which date not only were seats along the frequented thoroughfares generously provided, but also resting-places were constructed in convenient corners and recesses solely for the bearers of burdens, being so contrived that the loaded bearer could, unaided, shift his burden from his shoulders without stooping, and sit and rest beneath it until he had gathered strength to resume his route. The London porters, who, by the way, gave their name to the cool brown beverage they delight in, were much more numerous then than they are now; there was no parcels' delivery company, no railway vans, very little of intramural goods carriage, and the strong back of the porter was the general medium of delivery. No one then would have thought of treating a tired-out traveller to a seat on sharp spikes. But then, you see, the fathers and grandfathers of the existing race of Londoners were not half so respectable as their descendants.

### MEDICAL STUDENTS.

THERE seems to be a wish in some quarters to dispense with the Introductory Addresses delivered at the opening of the session in the London Schools of Medicine. We should very much regret the abandoning of so useful a custom—at least, if the addresses continue to be of the manly and practical kind of which that of Mr. Fairlie Clarke at Charing Cross Hospital was an example. We give a few extracts which contain advice suitable for young men of other occupations besides the study of medicine:—"It is not too much to say that everything depends upon the use which you make of the hours which are under your own control. Temptation rarely comes in busy, working hours. It is in his leisure time that a man is made or marred. Make up your minds firmly to your line of conduct, and follow your own course with decision and resolution. It is oftentimes more really manly and courageous to dare to say No, than it is to fall in with the suggestions of those who may be older than yourselves in years or in academical standing." Referring to the responsible and even solemn nature of the profession, he said:—"We seem to tread upon sacred ground while we accompany the hopeless sufferer to the very verge of this world, to that bourne from which no traveller returns, and this invests our profession with an interest and a solemnity entirely its own." He specially urged the cultivation of a thoughtful and considerate

manner, saying that this was quite compatible with a keen interest in the study of disease, and would be likely to win the confidence of the patient. To the senior students Mr. Fairlie Clarke said:—"To you more than to any other group among us is the welfare of this medical school committed. I do not under-estimate the influence of your teachers, but our influence is only exercised occasionally, yours is exercised constantly. It is scarcely too much to say that what you are the younger students will be. Remember the weight that your example must of necessity have, and let no light word thoughtlessly spoken sully the purity of the young minds that are joining us for the first time to-day. Let no word or act of yours cast ridicule upon the principles which have been learnt at a mother's knee and fostered under a father's roof. Let nothing induce you to suppose that idleness or dissipation is manly. There is no true manliness but in the diligent discharge of duty. I often think as I come within sight of Charing Cross that the very situation of our hospital is a constant reminder to us to do our duty faithfully and in a high-minded way. We are here surrounded by monuments of national grandeur. We are near the Houses of Parliament, the chief offices of State, and the abodes of royalty. The improvements which are now in progress in this neighbourhood are beautifying it and making it more worthy of being the great centre from which the influence of England goes forth over the whole world. Often when I have been coming to my work here, I have bethought me of that bright morning in October, 1805, when the English fleet bore down upon the combined squadrons of France and Spain off Cape Trafalgar. It scarcely needs the inscription on the Nelson monument to remind us of the watchword which was then signalled from the masthead of the Victory, and which stimulated all to do their duty so gallantly. Or I have bethought me of Sir Charles Napier, the very soul of honour and rectitude, so independent in his bearing towards his equals, so free from all time-serving and tuft-hunting, so just and considerate to those who were under his command, so kind and humane to those who were in trouble or distress. Or I have bethought me of Havelock, the very ideal of a soldier, an officer and a Christian, doing his work diligently and cheerfully, notwithstanding straitened circumstances and professional disappointment. It was not the stimulus of early success, nor the favour of princes, nor any lower motive, which carried him through the disappointing years which formed so large a portion of his military career. It was nothing short of strong Christian principle which sustained him. The monuments of these great men have been erected in our immediate neighbourhood, not merely to do honour to individuals, but to keep alive in the hearts of each succeeding generation the virtues for which these heroes were distinguished. If there is any class of the community who are likely to be influenced by the recollection of their noble deeds, it is surely the young men of England before whom life is just opening. Duty, honour, and the fear of God were the mainsprings in the character of these three great men. If you, students of Charing Cross Hospital, are fired with the same principles, we need have no fears for the success of the session which opens to-day. It cannot fail to be happy and prosperous." While wise and kindly advice like this is given, we shall be sorry to lose the Introductory Addresses at the Medical Schools.

## Varieties.

**THE TELEGRAPHIC SERVICE.**—The number of messages despatched by telegraph in 1874, not including newspaper telegrams, was more than 19,000,000, being ten per cent. more than in 1873. That the arrangements of the Head London Office have now reached a very high degree of efficiency is shown by the fact that on one occasion, when an important debate took place in Parliament, and there was an unusual number of interesting occurrences in different parts of the country, words sufficient to fill 220 columns of an ordinary daily newspaper were transmitted from the Central Station. There has been a large increase in the sum received as rental from private wires, it having risen from £47,000 to £53,000, or about twelve per cent. There is scarcely any kind of movement which does not give an impulse to the demand for telegraphic services. During the sitting of the Wesleyan Conference at the little Cornish town of Camborne, more than £350 was received there for telegrams, and the Thorpe accident occasioned the transmission of 900 ordinary telegrams through the Norwich office, and more than 5,200 newspaper press messages containing nearly 150,000 words.

**FLOATING FORTRESSES.**—If fortresses were, as I think they should be, built of iron, and floated, with small steam power for moving them about if necessary, an error in the choice of their position would be easily remedied; but when military engineers deliberately take the trouble and go to the expense of building these constructions "aground"—for a mid-water fortification is in just the same position as an ironclad Popoffka would be if she got aground—their errors in choice of position are irremediable, and the country and the national exchequer are permanent sufferers from their blunders. But why should maritime nations expend their money at all on naval fortresses that cannot move? I fancy if, in their great war with France and England, and a few other Powers, in 1854-6, the Russians could have steamed Fort St. Michael, say, round to Balaklava occasionally, the fate of the war might have been very different; but all the time nations employ two totally different sets of defenders, naval and military, with separate interests and separate professional traditions, we shall continue to see our maritime fortresses deprived of that most valuable property—the power of locomotion.—*E. J. Reed, M.P.*

**KENSINGTON SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND ART.**—Prince Leopold, in his speech on delivering the prizes at the School of Science and Art, at Oxford, gave an interesting report of the progress and influence of the parent institution at South Kensington. "The history of the Kensington School of Science and Art, of which the Oxford school is a branch, is a conspicuous illustration of the truth of the words I have just read. Through the kindness of Mr. Alan Cole, I have been furnished with some interesting statistics relating to the development of this central school. The Science and Art Department was first established in 1852, when the number of Art schools was 20, and the number of students 7,117. In the year 1874, by which time Art night schools had been organised, there were 132 Art schools, attended by 24,138 students; 653 Art night schools, attended by 21,851 students; and 23,735 elementary day schools, at which drawing was taught to 290,425 children. There were also 46 training colleges, in which 3,475 students were taught drawing. There were, therefore, last year 3,204 places where instruction in drawing was given under the rules of the Science and Art Department, and these places were attended by 339,889 individuals. With regard to the Science classes, they were first established in the year 1860. In the following year there were 38 classes, attended by 650 students, and this year the number amounts to 1,299, and the number of students to 62,314. Nor is this all. There now exists at the central school at Kensington a National Art Training School, established in 1852, and a Science Training School, established within the last three years. At both of these schools teachers destined to carry on instruction in the provinces receive an adequate training. Then as to the practical outcome of the vast machinery, I have also been furnished with valuable information. It appears that within the last fifteen years it was very much the custom of manufacturers of furniture, woven fabrics, pottery, and other goods in which tasteful decoration is an important feature, to obtain the greater part of their designs from France. Now, however, French manufacturers imitate many of the English designs, and offer their wares as specially attractive because they are *à la mode*

*à la mode Anglais.* English designers are, moreover, very largely employed in fields of labour formerly almost monopolised by foreigners. It must, I think, be allowed that the Kensington School of Science and Art has not laboured in vain, and that we are not far from proving—if, indeed, the proof be not already furnished—that, notwithstanding the stern nature of our climate, and the deadening effect, it is said, upon high authority, to have upon the powers of the imagination, English men and women are showing themselves well capable of producing works of an undoubtedly high imaginative order."

**TURKISH TYRANNY IN EUROPE.**—I saw yesterday a surgeon who has been attending a boy of thirteen, wantonly shot in broad daylight while gathering grapes, by a Mussulman youth of about the same age. The young assassin was carried in triumph around the neighbourhood by his companions, and, in reply to the complaint, an inquiry was instituted and a report made, which ended the affair, the culprit not being molested. The wounded lad will recover, though the ball passed through him from one hip to the other, and the missile was a military rifle shot. As a faint shade of the injustice, the authorities refuse now to pay the doctor's bill. A sample of the justice served out in Herzegovina, and which, we are so often told, leaves no reason for insurrection, must finish my letter. I saw one of the victims of it before I left Ragusa, just released from three years' imprisonment in irons, and I heard his story; but I have also heard confirmation and additional details from an authoritative source, not to be charged with Slave leanings. A certain young man from the neighbourhood of Trebinje had, in a quarrel, killed an Aga, and fled to Montenegro. His nearest male relations were, therefore, arrested, to the number of six, and thrown into prison, being tortured in various ways to compel confession of complicity, two being put in long wooden boxes, like coffins, and rolled downhill, others being stood upright with their heads in a hole in the floor of the prison, which allowed them to rest on their shoulders, having splinters of wood driven under their finger-nails (the boy I saw in Ragusa gave a minute account of the operation, sickening in its fidelity to detail). The father of the murderer died in prison, and one of the cousins was taken out of the prison here in Mostar, just five days before the Consular Commission arrived, and hanged before one of the mosques, to calm the excitement of the Bashibazouks, the ruffians who, to show their sense of such occasional luxuries, had only six days ago planned a general massacre of the Christians of Mostar, and were only dissuaded from their scheme by being assured by one of the more prudent Agas that such a feat would only result in the Austrian army taking possession of the country. This is the system on which Server Pasha is to base his reforms, and within which he hopes to find materials which will work harmoniously together for the consolidation of the Ottoman Government.—*Times' Correspondent in the Herzegovina.*

**MERCANTILE AFFAIRS IN THE UNITED STATES.**—The deplorable condition of mercantile affairs in the United States is strikingly illustrated by certain figures furnished by one of the mercantile agencies of New York. During the nine months ending September 30th last, there were in the whole of the United States 5,334 failures of mercantile houses, with liabilities amounting to £26,234,500. Of these failures, 546 were in New York City, with liabilities amounting to more than six millions sterling. In New York City and State together there were 1,022, with more than eight millions of liabilities. In Massachusetts there were 564 failures, with liabilities of more than three millions; in Pennsylvania 419 failures, with liabilities of nearly two and a half millions. In the fourteen Southern States there were 964 failures; in the fifteen Western States there were 1,763. During the same period of the first nine months of 1872, there were in the whole country only 3,050 failures, with liabilities of £14,158,800. In 1873 there were 3,887 failures, with £34,266,800. In 1874 the failures numbered 4,371, with £23,285,800; and now they are 5,334, with £26,234,500 of liabilities. The average number for four years has been 4,160; so that in the past nine months there has been an excess of 1,174 over the average, while the excess in liabilities is about £746,000. The worst of it is that there appears to be no prospect of an improvement in the situation.

A TALE

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